

THE CONNECTION

LEADING THE FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER IN SOUTHEAST TEXAS

You gave Derrik the strength to rebuild

Derrik feels fortunate that Hurricane Harvey didn't directly impact his life. Thousands of Southeast Texas neighbors weren't so lucky. Two years later, many struggle to rebuild their lives in the wake of that catastrophic storm.

Even though Harvey spared Derrik's home, it took a costly toll on his livelihood. As a self-employed computer technician who spent years building up a small business from his apartment, Derrik felt the financial pinch immediately.

"Business dried up after the storm," Derrik says, "and that's perfectly understandable. Computers were just about the last thing on anyone's mind then."

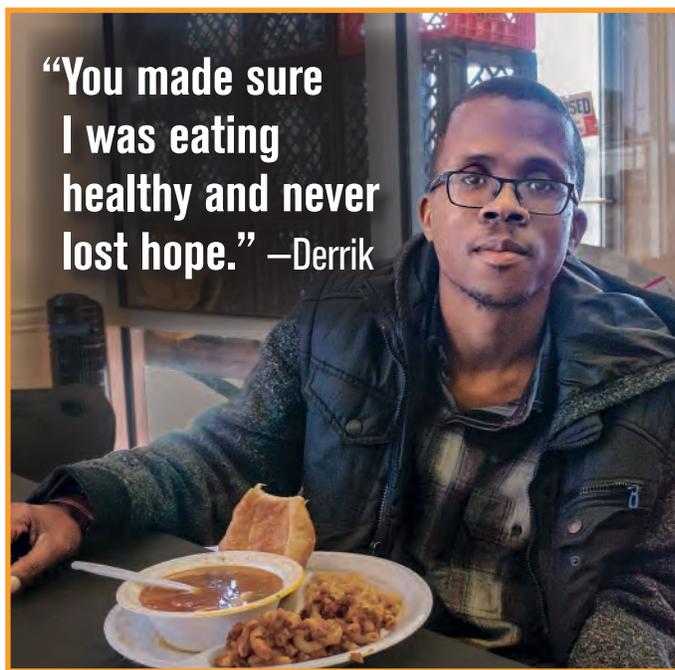
Derrik tried his best to make it on his own, but the bills began piling up. At last, he turned to a local soup kitchen in Port Arthur that partners with the Southeast Texas Food Bank.

"The soup kitchen allows me to supplement my food budget," Derrik explains. "I come here to cover meals during the bad months. It helps a lot."

Back to normal, thanks to you

In recent months, Derrik's business has picked back up again. His life has returned to normal, and that's given him time to reflect on the events of the last two years.

Looking back, Derrik says he's truly grateful for the meals he's received thanks to you. "You're



"You made sure I was eating healthy and never lost hope." —Derrik

Derrik lost his livelihood following Hurricane Harvey. The meals you provided helped him recover.

doing good," he says. "I just want you to know that your help makes a difference."

Derrik credits generous friends like you with lifting his spirits at an especially challenging time. "Regaining my footing after Harvey wasn't easy," he says. "You made sure I was eating healthy and never lost hope."



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Encouraging words from Dan



Dan Maher, Executive Director

The recovery process following a natural disaster can be slow and painful. Thousands of our neighbors here in Southeast Texas can attest to that. Hurricane Harvey's devastation caused a ripple effect that's still being felt by many in our community.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you, as a kindhearted friend of the Food Bank, for helping to ease the collective pain caused by this mass tragedy.

Almost two years ago, families displaced by the storm began picking up the pieces of their shattered existence. They returned home in hopes of carrying on with life as normal. For many, that meant getting back inside their four walls as quickly as possible. Any thoughts of buying groceries fell by the wayside as other critical concerns crowded their minds.

Your faithful generosity meant these families always had a place to turn to for wholesome, nutritious food. You helped Derrik and Tina, whose stories appear in these very pages.

Even now, your support helps provide Welcome Home Boxes for families working to resettle after the storm. These boxes contain a variety of foods for all meals of the day. They've supported basic nutrition for the hundreds of families you've helped so far.

More than just a 30-pound box of healthy, delicious food, you're providing them with peace of mind at an especially trying time. This summer and all year long, thank you for continuing to care about our Southeast Texas neighbors in need.

With gratitude,



Dan Maher, Executive Director

“Hurricane Harvey’s devastation caused a ripple effect that’s still being felt by many in our community.”

After Harvey, your kindness guided my recovery

I moved to Beaumont just before Hurricane Harvey. From the moment I got here, the community felt like home. Neighbors care about each other here. That became even clearer when two of the worst experiences of my life happened, one after the other. My husband passed away and the storm hit.

I had been staying with my family, but most of their property got wiped out. They had to rebuild their house, which left me with no place to go.

Regaining hope

I thought that I only had two choices: Either save up for an apartment or buy groceries. My job in home healthcare didn't pay enough to cover both. Thankfully, I learned about the food pantry. It meant I didn't have to make an impossible decision.

Now I'm getting back on my feet, and I have you to thank for it. The storm washed away any sense of stability I had. Now I'm feeling grounded again. Thank you for being there when I needed your help the most!

—Tina



Tina's grateful for the healthy food you provided through a Food Bank member pantry.

Program Spotlight

You help Southeast Texans SNAP out of hunger

Nearly 12,000 households in our region receive food from one of the Southeast Texas Food Bank's more than 100 member agencies. Those agencies cover Jefferson, Orange, Hardin, Jasper, Newton, Polk, Sabine, and Tyler Counties. Most of them are food pantries.

Your kind generosity ensures the Food Bank can distribute enough food to meet daily demands at each site. Through your financial support, you're providing healthy meals for hungry families, seniors, and neighbors with disabilities. For many of them, hunger is a temporary hurdle that can be overcome. Others need long-term assistance.

The SNAP Program, formerly known as food stamps, helps cover food expenses for people living in poverty. Every day, Food Bank employees visit



Your support connects hungry neighbors to life-changing resources.

our member agencies to help teach people about the program and sign them up for benefits if they qualify.

A surge in demand

One employee remembers the influx of need for SNAP assistance following the devastation of Hurricane Harvey: "People just lost everything. Their homes were flooded and anything left in the refrigerator or freezer turned rotten."

"The month before the storm, we turned in 70

applications," another employee recalls. "After, it was more like 180. It stayed that way for a long time."

Your support of the Food Bank helps ensure hungry neighbors receive the help they need—when they need it. Thank you for leading the fight against hunger in Southeast Texas!

Easing seniors' summertime burden

Summer can be a trying time of year for seniors in our Southeast Texas community. Medical issues tend to flare up at this time of year. In the daytime heat, everyday activities turn to strenuous exertions. To top it all off, utility costs go through the roof as seniors begin to lean heavily on air-conditioning.

For seniors barely subsisting on a meager, fixed income, something's got to give. Too often, these money-conscious men and women skip meals just to get by. It's a preventable problem that compassionate friends like you are helping to solve.

This year marks the second anniversary of the Southeast Texas Food Bank's Senior Box Program. Your support allows us to package and distribute more than 2,000 boxes a month for pre-qualified seniors in the region. Each box contains 30 pounds of nutritious food including cereals, canned fruits and vegetables, juices, proteins, beans, and grains.



Consider donating a few hours of your time to help prepare food boxes for seniors in need.

If you have a few hours to spare this summer, we encourage you to help us prepare Senior Food Boxes for grateful neighbors. You can find volunteer information at setxfoodbank.org, under the Get Involved tab.

This summer, hungry kids are feeling the heat

Summer should be a joyful time of year for children across Southeast Texas. Unfortunately, 1 in 4 children in our state lives in poverty. When summer vacation begins, hunger sets in. Kids from low-income families lose access to the free or reduced price breakfast and lunch programs that had been available during the school year.

This summer, you have the power to help. Your continued support of the Southeast Texas Food Bank funds vital initiatives that fight childhood hunger all summer long. We partner with feeding sites to help them provide breakfast and lunch for hungry kids across multiple high-need sites in Port Arthur and Beaumont.

At the end of the week, our Backpack Program helps kids supplement meals heading into the weekend. Each backpack includes healthy options like cereal, canned fruits and veggies, shelf-stable milk, and even fresh produce.

By providing healthy food options these kids would normally lack, you could help offset or even reverse some of the developmental delays caused by malnutrition. You'll make a sound investment in the future of Southeast Texas.

All kids deserve to enjoy a summer vacation free from hunger. Please consider making your next gift to make that possible. You can give online at setxfoodbank.org, or return the enclosed reply slip. Thank you.



Every \$1 you give could help provide 3 meals for hungry children and their families.

Your contribution to a healthier community

It's been almost two years since Hurricane Harvey wreaked havoc on the lives of so many of our Southeast Texas neighbors. Ever since, your support of the Southeast Texas Food Bank has helped restore a sense of normalcy for newly hungry and displaced neighbors.

This year, your generosity will allow us to distribute more than 2 million pounds of produce for people in need. You'll help those men, women, and children maintain a balanced diet and a healthier lifestyle.

Much of the work to collect and distribute fresh fruits and vegetables will occur in the coming months—during the height of the growing season. Your ongoing support will be critical. Thank you for continuing to care about hungry neighbors in Southeast Texas.

Stay connected to the work you support



MY SUMMER GIFT

YES, Dan, I want to provide healthy food for children and families this summer.

Enclosed is my gift:

- \$22 to help provide 66 meals and care \$33 to help provide 99 meals and care \$55 to help provide 165 meals and care
- \$_____ my monthly commitment to reach out to the needy in Southeast Texas
- \$_____ to provide as many meals and as much care as possible

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

IT'S EASY! Give online at setxfoodbank.org

Your donation is tax deductible as permitted by law. The Southeast Texas Food Bank will send you a receipt in appreciation for your kindness to individuals and families who rely on us for food.

Your gifts change lives!



Please make your check payable to:
Southeast Texas Food Bank

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